

## BEHAVIORAL CHANGE THROUGH MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING AT JUVENILE COURT



(L-R) Shirley Terrell, Jason Tate, NaKeshi Dyer, Michael D. Clark, MSW, Lakesia Martin, Susan Gylfe

Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County is committed to implementing innovative ways to best serve the interests of children and their families.

Shirley Terrell, Jason Tate, NaKeshi Dyer, Lakesia Martin and Susan Gylfe recently received certification for completing the train-the-trainer segment of Motivational Interviewing conducted by Michael D. Clark, MSW, LMSW. They will be allowed to join the CJ-MINT list serve which is an international group who train and develop MI materials and strategies for the criminal justice and juvenile justice fields. As a result, they'll be linked with justice trainers from Europe and across the US. Most importantly, they will have a direct hand in how adolescents and their families are treated within our nation's courts – more respect, higher engagement and more retention in services.

MI is an approach that is gaining popularity and momentum as it aids juvenile courts in achieving positive change. In the 1980s, MI gained prominence in the substance abuse field due to its ability to enhance client engagement and retention in treatment. In the 1990s, MI gained support in juvenile courts and the approach has expanded; it has been embraced by the U S Department of Justice and the National Institute of Corrections. This evidence-based practice examines conditions that build cooperation and increase human motivation.

Michael D. Clark, Director of the Center for Strength-Based Strategies of Mason, Michigan, identified Juvenile Court as one of 10 juvenile courts around the country that have gone this far in the process. The five have named themselves *The Memphis MITs* and they are in the process of developing a training proposal to take this strategy court-wide. The group began training in December 2010 and committed to monthly sessions as well as daily practice to master the various components of MI.